

NUCLEAR POWER

Abalone breaches nuclear defences

By Larry Remer

IN AFFINITY GROUPS OF SIX OR SEVEN, they fanned out across the alfalfa-covered hills. Several dozen made amphibious landings on a narrow beach inside the perimeter. Their target: Pacific Gas and Electric's nuclear generating plant at Diablo Canyon near San Luis Obispo. And when their Hiroshima Day assault was over, nearly 500 anti-nuclear protesters had been arrested—the largest nuclear plant occupation on the west coast to date.

Led by the Abalone Alliance, a grass-roots network of radical environmentalists and ecologists, California's anti-nuclear forces have been battling the \$1.4 billion Diablo Canyon plant—which, incidentally, lies astride an earthquake fault—for several years. Last Hiroshima Day, 61 protesters were arrested for occupying the site.

But this year, with the plant scheduled to become operational in mid-fall Alliance organizers knew they'd have to pull out all the stops. Their choice of peaceful, non-violent direct action as a tactic proved critical in mobilizing popular support. Their long, hard organizing drive bore fruit on Hiroshima Day, Sunday, Aug. 6, when 3,500 demonstrators gathered outside to protest nuclear power, while hundreds were scaling the walls, burrowing under the fences, and landing on the beach in small boats in an effort to get inside the plant.

More than 135 San Luis Obispo County sheriff's deputies, in full riot gear, were deployed on the plant grounds to arrest demonstrators as they breached the boundaries. They were backed up by local police and PG&E security personnel. Those arrested were charged with trespassing. Most were released the next day on their own recognizance, though some balked and tried to stay in jail to continue the protest. There were no reports of violence or vandalism. By the end of the week all had been forced to leave.

The stated goal of the Alliance was to stop completion of the plant. "By placing our bodies directly in the machinery of Diablo Canyon," declared Tony Metcalf, 27, a protestor from nearby Avila, "We hope to be able to stop the construction through non-violent means."

But failing that, the specter of popular opposition raised by the arrests and the rally should help galvanize public opinion against nuclear power.

"We have to emphasize our determination to convert from nuclear power to safe, renewable energy sources like solar," noted Beverly Susan, 23, who came to Diablo with an affinity group from tiny Westhaven, Calif., near Humboldt, far to the north. "And we have to convert nuclear plant jobs to occupations that are more socially useful."

To underscore their Diablo opposition, on Monday, an additional 100 demonstrators were arrested for blockading the gates to the plant.

Elsewhere in California, on Saturday more than 1,500 people marched in front of Seal Beach Naval Weapons Center, south of Los Angeles, where nuclear weapons are stored. Organized by the Southern California Alliance for Survival, several speakers at the rally demanded that defense spending be rechanneled into social programs.

And in San Diego on Sunday, Hiroshima Day, the Community Energy Action Network kicked off a "People's Right to Know Campaign." Pickets at the San Onofre nuclear generating facility demanded that the visitor information center there carry anti-nuclear materials alongside the pro-nuclear propaganda it hands out.

Such concerted grass-roots opposition to nuclear power could push the issue of

Waves of protesters entered PG&E's Diablo Canyon nuclear plant. Over 500 non-violent activists were arrested on Hiroshima Day.

nuclear energy to the forefront of California's pending gubernatorial campaign. Earlier this year, buttressed by strong popular opposition, Gov. Brown spearheaded a campaign that stopped construction of the Sundesert nuclear plant. In retaliation, the state's energy lobby—utilities and oil companies—have lined up behind Brown's opponent, Attorney General Evelle Younger, a nuclear energy proponent.

Brown, an enigmatic and crafty politician, has previously supported nuclear alternatives like solar energy and wind power—a posture his critics have called esoteric and frivolous. With inflation running high and the California economy still reeling from Prop. 13-imposed layoffs and service cutbacks, this will be a bread-and-butter election. For Brown to remain outspoken in his support for nuclear energy alternatives, he will have to sense that the public supports him on the issue. To this end, the Diablo action and other Hiroshima Day activities were a good beginning. ■



Using homemade portable ladders, anti-nuclear forces "go over the top" at Diablo Canyon nuclear facility. Practicing civil-disobedience, they were quickly arrested.

Oregon's nuclear Trojan horse

By Rick Mitchell

P O R T L A N D

SUCCESSIVE WAVES OF DEMONSTRATORS moved onto the site of the Trojan nuclear power plant, 40 miles northwest of Portland, Ore., in an effort to shut down the largest operational nuclear facility in the U.S. Over 200 people were arrested during the four-day action that began Aug. 6, the 23rd anniversary of the destruction of Hiroshima. The series of daily demonstrations is the third major non-violent action staged by the Trojan Decommissioning Alliance (TDA) in the last 12 months.

Demonstrators entered the site by a number of methods. Most used a set of portable stairs to jump over the main gate. A few swam in across a pond. All were arrested immediately by county sheriffs and Oregon State Patrolmen and taken to one of six county jails. They were charged with second degree trespass. Bail was set at \$2,500 per person.

Despite the overcrowded conditions at some of the jails, with a shortage of blankets and inedible food, the prisoners' spirits were reported to be high. Except in a few cases of family or job commitments, bail solidarity ("no one leaves until we all do") was maintained. TDA has no bail fund, and it is not known how long the protesters will remain in jail after they are arraigned.

Most of those arrested are pleading not guilty, and they will seek a jury trial. No defense strategy has yet been decided upon. Occupiers in the December occupation were acquitted after using a "lesser of two evils" Oregon statute to introduce expert testimony on the dangers of nuclear energy. This defense was not allowed in the June occupation trial, and demonstrators were found guilty of trespassing and given 30 days suspended sentences and 30 days probation. There is a possibility that



Demonstrators assemble in front of Trojan plant during four-day protest.

this time the TDA legal team will use testimony from the Tchinouk Indian Tribe. They claim that the Trojan plant sits on land belonging to the Tchinouk, not PGE, by right of a 19th century treaty. The tribe sent a letter to the Alliance extending permission to come onto the land if they promised to treat it with "respect and reverence."

In the week preceding the demonstration, Portland General Electric (PGE), the major owner of Trojan, sought a court injunction against any demonstration at the site organized by the TDA, and two other Oregon anti-nuclear groups: the Coalition for Safe Power and the Columbia Environmental Council. The judge, while unsympathetic to PGE's request, could find no grounds for an injunction against the organization. He did, however, issue a temporary injunction against 27 indi-

viduals proven to have participated in both previous occupations.

The strategy of civil disobedience appears to have met with some success. Since TDA began sponsoring actions at Trojan last year, public concern over low-level radiation leakage, on-site waste storage, and rate-hikes for plant construction costs has steadily increased. A poll taken last January showed that more people in Oregon oppose Trojan's new policy of storing its spent fuel rods on the site than support it. The local newspapers have begun to question PGE more frequently about the problems of nuclear energy. Recently the Oregon Democratic Party endorsed a Trojan shut-down and a moratorium on new construction of nuclear plants until the waste storage and radiation safety questions are satisfactorily answered. ■

U.S./RHODESIA

Congress forces Carter backdown on trade embargo

By Ken Cummins

WASHINGTON

THE CONGRESSIONAL ASSAULT on the trade embargo against civil war-torn Rhodesia during the past three weeks has forced the Carter administration into promoting a compromise it had earlier opposed.

The administration hopes to mend its battered Southern Africa policy by supporting a Senate-passed amendment lifting the trade barriers against Rhodesia.

The Senate version, sponsored by Sen. Clifford Case, maverick New Jersey Republican, would lift the barriers for a nine-month trial period beginning next Jan. 1, provided that free elections are held in Rhodesia and that the Rhodesian government negotiates "in good faith" with all parties for the establishment of black majority rule. The administration originally opposed the Case amendment because "we wanted no change in our Rhodesia policy." But President Carter reluctantly supported the Case amendment in order to forestall an effort by Senate conservatives to end the embargo immediately.

The House, meanwhile, delivered a severe body blow to President Carter's Rhodesia policy two weeks ago when it voted, 229 to 180, to lift the trade sanctions at the end of this year provided that free elections are held.

Unlike the Senate version, the House-passed amendment puts no pressure on Prime Minister Ian Smith and his white minority government to include the leaders of the Patriotic Front in the negotiations for the transfer of power.

An internal settlement between Smith and three moderate black leaders provided for the transfer of power through elections this December but excluded the guerilla forces of the Patriotic Front, led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe.

The Carter administration has maintained that it would not support any settlement that does not include the Patriotic Front, and the President has refrained from openly endorsing the Salisbury agreement. He also stood firmly against reversing the 12-year-old UN-imposed trade restrictions against Rhodesia.

Conservatives assail Carter.

It was Carter's position toward the Soviet-equipped and Cuban-trained guerilla forces of the Patriotic Front that led to the President's troubles with Congress. Disapproval of the administration's Rhodesia policy has been growing on Capitol Hill because many felt that Carter's policy tilted too much in favor of the Patriotic Front.

"U.S. policy toward Rhodesia is absolutely disgusting," said Rep. John Ashbrook, R-Ohio, during the House floor debate. "The Carter administration is supporting pro-Communist terrorists and guerillas while turning its back on the moderate bi-racial government."

During the Senate debate on lifting the sanctions, a "middle ground" proposal was pushed by Case and Sen. Jacob Javits (R-NY) in an effort to blunt a more hardline position being promoted by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC).

In the House Carter forces unsuccessful

fully tried to get an amendment in the House patterned after the Case-Javits amendment. Some congressional observers criticized the administration for underestimating the strength of resentment to its Rhodesia policy in the House. A State Department official described the floor maneuvering by House conservatives led by Rep. Richard Ichord, who controlled the debate on the issue, as a "well organized move by people who wanted to lift the sanctions."

If the Ichord amendment survives the House-Senate conference, President Carter would be forced to end the trade embargo next Jan. 1 after determining that the elections scheduled for this December were indeed free elections. Under the wording of the Case-Javits amendment, the President would be required to suspend the sanctions Jan. 1, 1979, after the new government has been elected and after determining that the Smith government had attempted to negotiate with all parties in "good faith." Either way, the burden of the decision is put squarely upon the President with a hostile Congress watching over his shoulder. Despite the sharp rebuke of its policy by the House vote, the Carter administration reaffirmed its current position as the only way to end the fighting and create the conditions for free elections.

The erosion of the administration's policy toward Rhodesia began on June 28 when Sen. Helms unexpectedly moved that trade sanctions be lifted immediately for a one-year period. The move failed by the surprisingly close vote of 48 to 42. Helms let it be known at that time that during the upcoming Senate debate on a military foreign aid bill he would try to have the sanctions suspended for six months.

Smith seeks to end UN embargo.

The lifting of the sanctions at this time was considered crucial to the Smith regime because, as a recent staff report by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations noted, "After 12 years, the Rhodesian economy had finally begun to reveal the crippling effect of these sanctions."

The trade barriers were imposed by the UN and adopted by President Johnson after Smith declared Rhodesia independent of Great Britain in 1965, and were intended to force the new government to move toward democratically-elected black majority rule. But American firms and other businesses have encountered few problems in getting around the sanctions, and the illegal Smith regime survived in defiance of world opinion.

With the growing economic pressure on Salisbury earlier this year Smith began appealing to his conservative friends in the U.S. for an end to the sanctions. If the U.S. would take the lead in lifting the embargo, Smith concluded, England and other countries would quickly follow suit.

The American Conservative Union (ACU) and other conservative groups, after their near-victory on the Panama Canal treaties, decided to go after those senators who faced angry constituencies back home because of their support for the treaties. The idea, an ACU lobbyist explained, was to convince those senators that they could regain support in their home districts by moving to a more con-



Rep. John Ashbrook (R-OH) has fought government support for "pro-Communist terrorists."

After their near-victory on Panama, congressional conservatives have adopted the Rhodesia settlement as their new cause. They almost got Sen. Edward Brooke to agree.

servative position on Rhodesia.

In early May, businessmen, conservatives and drug-store war novelist Robin Moore met with Sen. Edward Brooke. They came away convinced that Brooke would soon offer a resolution embracing the internal agreement and loosening the trade restrictions. Moore, author of *The Green Berets* and other hard-line militarist books, has been in Rhodesia since mid-1976 writing articles and books that support Smith's internal settlement.

Moore explained that Brooke's role as an "American black endorsing the internal settlement" would have proved a shot in the arm to the cause. But before Brooke was able to make his eagerly anticipated endorsement, the news of his divorce scandals splashed across the front pages, and the conservatives shied away from him.

"There was no other black in the Congress who could be persuaded to do this," explained Kent Crane, former CIA case officer in Africa, now an international investment businessman and the architect

of the Republican National Committee's policy on Southern Africa.

So the task of prodding Congress into lifting the embargo fell to Jesse Helms. Helms is popular among conservatives, has amassed a \$4.6 million campaign fund and there is speculation that he is planning a 1980 GOP presidential bid.

The closeness of the June 28th vote alarmed the administration. The hostile mood in the Senate forced Case to present his amendment to head off Helms. With the wording hammered out to soothe the concerns of the White House, the Case-Javits amendment drew the support of Senate liberals and passed 59 to 36.

During the Senate debate, Helms was in constant contact with the Smith government in Salisbury. Many in Congress, in both the House and Senate supported Smith and embraced the internal settlement. The continuation of the economic sanctions now depends on the outcome of the December elections.

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